

elements 462, 464 and 466 removable from the remainder of the sheet product 410. Each element 362, 372, 382 bears one of the variable data fields 325-327 and further preferably includes one of the static graphic fields 436-438. Again, the scorings further preferably define closed perimeter key ring holes 474 and 484 in key tag elements 472 and 482, which are smaller than the transaction card element 462.

FIG. 13 depicts a series of steps for one preferred method to fabricate a sheet product 410. The first and second core strips 418, 420 are preferably first printed with their variable data fields and any static graphic fields at step 490. Depending upon how they are printed, individual core strips 418 or 418 and 420 may be cut from longer lengths containing a plurality of different sets of variable data fields 424-427 and/or 428-429. Core strips 418 and 420 are thereafter joined together side-by-side by the application of one (or two) cover strip(s) at step 492. Again, two cover strips can be applied simultaneously or sequentially in a manner appropriate for the materials selected, preferably to form a lamination with the core strips 418, 420 and each cover strip 440 and/or 450. Next, the laminated sheet products is scored at step 494 to define the removable element 462, 472, 482 as well as any closed perimeter key ring hole(s) 474, 484, line of perforation 434, and to separate individual self-mailers 310 from one another if multiple self-mailers were being simultaneously made. After scoring, an adhesive is applied at step 496 and the mailer folded and sealed at 498 or the two operations combined in a single step at 498'. In addition, at some point preferably after the joining step 492 and before the adhesive application step 496, each of the two edge-positioned variable data fields 424 and 429 are machine-read and the two codes recorded in a common data set to identify the unique numeric code of the second core strip variable data fields 424-427 assigned to the individual whose name and address is indicated at variable data field 428.

It will be appreciated that the individual variable data fields 424 and 429 can be otherwise located and read at different stages. For example, referring back to FIG. 12, the variable data field may alternatively be located at locations 424' and 429' and read before or as the two core strips were being joined in step 492 or in any of the subsequent steps prior to the folding and closure step(s) 498, 498'.

While two embodiment self-mailers have been disclosed in detail and several variations to them suggested in their descriptions, still other variations will occur to those of ordinary skill in the art and are intended to be included as part of the invention. These variations are currently less preferred because, at the present time with available equipment, they would be more difficult to make or involve more steps and/or greater cost. For example, the unique numeric codes can be applied to the second core strip of the self-mailer in the manner indicated above, machine-read after the first and second core strips were joined, and then used to control a printer printing the name and address of the unique individual to whom the mailer was to be sent on the second core strip, preferably at some point after the first and second core strips are joined together in step 492. Clearly, other possible arrangements of data on self-mailers and forms of self-mailers can be provided. Also while a printed bar code is preferred for ease of manufacture and/or use, printed magnetic codes can also be used. Furthermore, the size of the mailer can vary from that depicted and the length dimensions of the core strips can vary with the length of the first core strip forming the outer cover of the mailer preferably greater than the length of the contained second core strip bearing the removable card elements. Furthermore, instead of a one-piece, integral first cover strip joining the two core strips together and overlapping the removable printed elements, the self-mailer sheet products can be provided with separate cover strips, one joining together ends of the

first and second core strips and another separate cover strip overlapping those portions of the second core strip forming the removable element(s) on the same side of the core as the first strip.

It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that changes could be made to the embodiments described above without departing from the broad inventive concept thereof. It is understood, therefore, that this invention is not limited to the particular embodiments disclosed, but it is intended to cover modifications within the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. An integral printed self-mailer sheet product comprising:

a generally planar core having first and second opposing major planar sides, the core being formed by first and second core strips of different materials positioned side-by-side, the planar core being printed on its major sides with a plurality of variable data fields, at least a first variable data field being printed with a name and address of an individual person and at least a second variable data field being printed with a unique numeric code in a machine readable format assigned the individual person, at least two of the plurality of variable data fields being printed on the second core strip;

a first cover strip permanently fixed to one major side of each of the first and second core strips irremovably holding adjoining ends of the first and second core strips together in a joint to define the generally planar core, the first cover strip only partially covering one major side of the first core strip and at least partially covering one major side of the second core strip;

scoring extending at least sufficiently through the sheet product in the second core strip to define at least a first printed element removable from a remainder of the sheet product, the first removable printed element including only a portion of the second core strip bearing at least one of the at least two variable data fields printed on the second core strip;

the second core strip having a width in a direction perpendicular to the joint between the first and second core strips and a length in direction parallel to the joint; and

the first core strip having a width in a direction perpendicular to the joint at least twice as great as the width of the second core strip.

2. The sheet product of claim 1 wherein the first cover strip spans a portion of the second core strip including the first removable printed element and the scoring defining the first removable printed element further extends through the first cover strip.

3. The sheet product of claim 1 wherein the first planar strip comprises a cellulose material and the second planar strip comprises a polymer material.

4. The sheet product of claim 1 wherein the second planar strip consists essentially of a polymer material.

5. The sheet product of claim 4 wherein the first planar strip consists essentially of a cellulose material.

6. The sheet product of claim 1 wherein the scoring defines a second printed element including the second variable data field printed on the second core strip removable from a remainder of the second core strip and from the first core strip.

7. The sheet product of claim 1 wherein one of the plurality of variable data fields is printed in at least machine readable format along an outer edge of both the second core strip and the printed sheet product.

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